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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

designs being actual reductions of copyists from larger original models existing in spacious Italian edifices.

THE house painter of to-day finds he has more to do than paint, stain or grain flat surfaces, or give to mouldings a monochrome tint. He is called on to apply artistic skill in coloring mouldings of varied plastic materials, on walls, ceilings, doors and architraves in a variety of hues and in such a way as shall emphasise their salient points, intensify the lights and shades of form, at the same time producing a general harmonious effect. He has to select colors for his friezes not only with reference to those on ceiling and middle wall space, but to carpets, hangings, and upholstery furniture coverings.

EVEN with embossed paper laid in one tint he is called on to give it variety of effect, to trace with a charged brush the reticulations of arabesque work and interlacing stems, and impart something like the atmosphere effect of perspective to masses of foliage by darkening or lightening the tints of leaves according to relative distance; also to touch up with colors fruits, flowers and grotesques, to cause cupids to appear to float in air, and caryatides to wear an expression of pain. There are house painters who have developed in those lines decided artistic power, but the failures are many, and for the attainment of any general excellence we must look to the technical framing to be provided in the future in advance of the shop for the painters' craft, for to excel in an art it is not merely clever manipulation that is requisite but a knowledge of guiding principles.

THE impossibility of producing the same effects by the combination of the pigments and the colors of the spectrum, with which latter all theories of color deal, is on all hands acknowledged, and the difference is practically recognized by the decorative colorist. He accordingly deals with the primary colors of pigments, not those attributed to the prism. Red, yellow and blue cannot be produced by the mixture of other color pigments, but these colors are capable of producing by admixture all other colors. It will be at once evident that the colors of each set are different, the primary green and violet sensations being substituted by yellow and blue as primary color pigments, a substitution which causes one to wonder whether red, the remaining primary of light, is of the same hue as the primary pigment of that name. With pigments the term red is often applied to a color that verges on orange or violet, green may be almost yellow or blue, and violet may mean almost pink or blue. There is evidently as much difference between the primary red spectrum and the primary red pigment as between the green of each. In the spectrum the green light is more inclined to yellow than blue, and the violet light is a decided blue violet and has been named blue by some writers. In pigments the primary colors are the reverse of this. The best red pigment for the mixture with the greatest number of other colors is a common red; the best yellow is more inclined to orange than blue; the best blue is a green blue.

IF a painting is executed directly upon smooth glass there is simply produced raw garish looking work, simply because the painter cannot glaze or put on the finishing touches which are so important to the finished effect of an oil or water color painting. It is a common practice to paint a figure subject or a landscape in oil either upon silk, canvas or paper, to cover it with varnish, and whilst the varnish is wet or tacky to secure the painting to the glass, all the air being carefully pressed out between it and the glass. We see no valid reason why this style of decoration, in combination with embossed ornament, might not be used for the friezes of the entablatures and for the panels of doors, certain portions of ceilings, panels of sideboards, wardrobes, book-cases, etc., suitable designs being introduced, and the treatment careful in order to avoid vulgarity. The polish of the glass may appear an objection, but with coloring kept quiet and in perfect harmony, with gold and silver gilding, a richness of effect could be obtained with a perfection of finish.

THE largest picture in a room should always have a central position so that those of less size may be grouped symmetrically around it. A broad margin to the mount, and a narrow light frame suits engravings and water color paintings, these having a margin to isolate the painting or engraving. There is the more reason for a narrow frame if the wall has a pattern upon it. To be displayed to the best advantage, oil paintings require heavier frames, a broad margin being required to effect its isolation. The frames should not be too elaborately ornamented, for it is not the frame we want to exhibit. By

giving it breadth and comparative plainness the eye takes in the whole without being confused.

PICTURES of all kinds should be kept free from dust at the back, for where this accumulates injury is sure to result. To effect this, two pieces of cork at the bottom edge of the frame will keep it from the wall, relieve the pressure, and allow the dust to a great degree to fall down and be cleared away. Gold frames should never be dusted with anything but a feather brush, and this not by inexperienced persons. In cleaning the glass of water color paintings the greatest care should be used to avoid rubbing the frames. They should never be wetted with the sponge or leather or they will be easily spoiled.

IRON-WORK across the face of fanlights of front doors have long been used for protection, but in many instances they are now thought worthy of being carried out in good decorative designs, some of these being enriched with scrolls and leaves in the upper part, with the initials of the owner worked in. We are always glad to recognize evidences of refined taste in metallic architectural work as applied to dwellings, as in delicately wrought leafage, light fillets and scrolls flowing gracefully out of curves, and bars showing alike quaintness and vigor.

ORNAMENT pleases most when manifestly subsidiary to the main design. If in excess, or consisting of forms frequently repeated, it loses much of its beauty.

A PLAY IN SOCIETY.

THE dainty theater of the Berkeley Lyceum, already described in our columns, has easily succeeded in gaining the stamp of approval from New York society, and many notable affairs have taken place within its walls during the past year. Readings by famous authors, lectures, concerts, performances by the dramatic clubs of Columbia College and the University of the City of New York, and the production of standard plays by the leading amateur societies have given the little house a distinct social prestige.

Among the various entertainments the most elegant have been those of the Amateur Comedy Club, and we are indebted to the courtesy of Messrs. Joseph P. McHugh & Co., the decorators of the theater, for the privilege of illustrating their setting of the first and third acts of "London Assurance," produced on January 28th and 29th. The engravings will be found on pages 177 and 184. For these performances no tickets are sold, and the invitations are strictly confined within the limits prescribed by Mr. MacAllister. The audience "assists" in full evening costume; a hum of conversation is not obtrusively interrupted by the music discoursed by a discretely subdued orchestra, and the general air of easy informality is entirely characteristic of a gathering of the four hundred.

At the tinkling of a bell, the chatter is hushed, the embroidered curtains glide noiselessly apart, and the play proceeds.

The costumes are perfect, the players well up in their lines, passion, and grief, and mirth are depicted in a politely repressed key, even the low comedian and the servants enacting their parts in a semi-apologetic fashion, carefully smoothing anything which might hint at a lack of refinement and eliminating any expressions of the misguided author calculated to grate harshly on the sensitive ears of their friends. Languidly expressed approval punctuates the evolution of the plot, flowers are passed over the footlights at the proper intervals, the tableaux are re-demanded, and the performance goes calmly on to a close.

The stage decoration is of course a feature. In the Tapestry scene, carved oaken furniture with ornamentation of black iron, upholstered in dark stuffs, harmonizes well with the heavily embroidered portieres of velours which curtain the doorways, and the Gobelins and Beauvais tapestries which hang on the walls.

In exquisite contrast is the light decoration of the white and gold room with its draperies of rose Spanish satin, furniture in pale blue and cream, and ornaments in onyx and gold.

Everything is real, the costly bric-a-brac and rare articles of vertu are loaned for the occasion by members of the club, and nothing is omitted to complete these pictures of luxury and taste. A noted artist, whose opinions are held to be as good as his pictures, was asked for a criticism of the performance. "Well," he said "it was magnificently upholstered."

One of the most carefully edited and artistic architectural journals in the country is The National Builder, published in Chicago. A specimen of the excellent work to be found in its columns can be seen on page 172, to which it is transferred by permission of the publishers.